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Author(s): C. J. F. Dowsett

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A NEGLECTED PASSAGE IN THE HISTORY OF THE CAUCASIAN ALBANIANS

By C. J. F. DOWSETT

IN the majority of the extant manuscripts of the *Patmut'iwñ Aluaniç* by Movsēs Kalankatuāçi,¹ and subsequently in the printed editions² and the Russian translation³ of this work, a passage containing some not unimportant historical information concerning Caucasian Albania in the ninth century A.D. has come to be omitted. In 1897 Xaçik Dadean reproduced in *Ararat*⁴ the text of this passage as he found it in two manuscripts in the patriarchal library of Etchmiadzin, but owing to the comparative inaccessibility of the said journal and perhaps also to the fact that the passage has never been translated, it has been overlooked by Western scholars. Fortunately, however, the text is contained in the manuscript of the *History* belonging to the British Museum,⁵ and although it is not the best text among the group of manuscripts which contain the passage, for the readings of the others are often to be preferred, it will be reproduced below as the best complete manuscript text at our disposal at present.

In Book III, Chapter 20, of his *History*,⁶ Movsēs relates how al-Ma'mūn

¹ i.e. in those manuscripts first classified as forming Group I by X. Dadean, 'The MSS of Movsēs Kalankatuāçi' [in Armenian], *Ararat*, 1895, 235, 333–88, 425; 1897, 67, 161. The passage is contained in Etchmiadzin MSS nos. 1725 (seventeenth century) and 2561 (A.D. 1664), British Museum MS Or. 5621 (seventeenth century), Paris (Bibliothèque Nationale) MS no. 220 (A.D. 1857), Venice (San Lazzaro) MSS nos. 1485 (seventeenth century) and 1146 (c. A.D. 1842), and in a Qarabagh manuscript, variants from which were noted in Venice MS no. 1146; all these manuscripts belong to the so-called Group II and will here be referred to as E1725, E2561, BM, P220, V1, V2, and Q respectively. I am able to quote the Etchmiadzin variants through the kindness of Dr. N. Akinean of Vienna, who allowed me to consult lists of variants in his possession prepared by Dadean. M. M. Al'tman, *Istoricheskie ocherki goroda Gandzhi*, chast' 1 (publication of the Institute of History of the Academy of Sciences of the Azerbaidjan S.S.R.), Baku, 1949, p. 15, n. 1, mentions an article by T. I. Ter-Grigoryan [Tër-Grigorean] entitled *K voprosu ob 'Istorii strany albanskoi' Moiseya Kagankatuiskogo* ('neizdannaya rukopis' [unpublished manuscript] n/arkhiva In-ta Istorii A. N. Azerb. S.S.R. no. 991'). From Al'tman's brief summary of this article we see that Tër-Grigorean also considers the passage under discussion to have been part of the original *History*. Al'tman (or Tër-Grigorean) rightly points out that 'the inclusion [of the missing folios] in the published text of the *History of the Albanians* adjusts those discrepancies in the chronology of Dasxorançi [Kalankatuāçi] hitherto unexplained'. I owe this reference to Professor Minorsky who has just (June 1957) received Al'tman's interesting work.

² K. Šahnazarean, *Patmut'iwñ Aluaniç arareal Movsisi Kalankatuāçwoy*, Paris, 1860, 2 vols.; M. Ėmin, *Movsēsi Kalankatuāçwoy Patmut'iwñ Aluaniç aşzarhi*, Moscow, 1860, reprinted Tiflis, 1912.

³ K. P. Patkanov (Patkanean), *Istoriya Agvan Moiseya Kagankatvatsi*, St. Petersburg, 1861.

⁴ X. Dadean, *Ararat*, 1897, 161 ff.; part of the Armenian text is also quoted by M. Barxutareanç, *Patmut'iwñ Aluaniç*, Part I, Valaršapat, 1902, 134–5.

⁵ MS no. Or. 5261; see F. C. Conybeare, *A catalogue of the Armenian manuscripts in the British Museum* . . . , London 1913, p. 292. My thanks are due to the Director and Trustees of the British Museum for permission to reproduce fol. 242r–243v of this manuscript here.

⁶ Ed. Šahnazarean, vol. II, p. 58, ed. Ėmin (III.21), p. 265, tr. Patkanean, p. 270; these works will henceforth be referred to as S, E, and Patk. respectively.

attacked the Byzantines in the year 280 of the Armenian era (A.D. 831/2) and how 'after three years' (i.e. A.D. 834/5) 'a certain emir Badslī¹ came at the command of the prince of the Tačiks [the caliph]' and martyred a certain Yovhan in Naxiḡevan. After this episode most manuscripts, both editions, and the Russian translation continue thus: 'When another two years had passed after this, Xazr Patgos,² a furious and merciless man, came and was killed in the same year'. The date apparently implied by this passage (A.D. 836/7) considerably embarrassed Markwart, who recognized in this **խազր** Xazr, amended to ***խազր** *Xald, Khālīd b. Yazīd b. Mazyad, who governed Armenia for the third time under the caliph Wāthīq (824–47) and died whilst marching to attack Ishāq b. Ismail al-Tiflīsī. Since 836/7 is far too early a date for Khālīd's death,³ Markwart felt compelled to make other amendments in the Armenian text as he knew it, and consequently attempted to correct the date by assuming that the reading 'after 2 (բ) years' was an error for 'after 8 (ը) years', concluding that the governorship reported by Movsēs Kalankatuāçi fell in the year A.D. 844 or 845. Apart from the fact

¹ This name has been much distorted in the various manuscripts and editions: E, *Badol*; S, *Badoti*; S, var., *Bardoti*; BM, Q, *Badx mi*; V1, V2, *Badsxi*; Patk., 270, *Badslī*; the form *Badslī* is contained in a list of variants (in the possession of Dr. N. Akinean of Vienna and micro-filmed for me, with his kind permission, by my friend Dr. W. C. H. Driessen of Nijmegen) from a Tabriz manuscript. This is clearly al-Ḥasan b. 'Āli al-Bad^hghīsi (الباذغيسى), who was appointed governor of Armenia either under the caliph al-Ma'mūn (c. A.D. 786–833) according to Ya'qūbī, II.566 (followed by M. Ghazarian, *Armenien unter der arabischen Herrschaft*, Marburg, 1903, p. 42, no. 61, and J. Laurent, *L'Arménie entre Byzance et l'Islam*, Paris, 1919, pp. 344–5, no. 74), or under al-Mu'tasim (A.D. 833–42), according to Balādhuri, 211. R. R. Vasmer (Fasmer), *Chronologie der arabischen Statthalter von Armenien*, Wien, 1931, 102–3, dates his governorship as A.H. 218–20 (A.D. 833/4–835/6). Movsēs' dating is couched in terms too vague to decide the question, but seems rather to support Balādhuri. J. Markwart (*Osteuropäische und ostasiatische Streifzüge*, Leipzig, 1903, 462), followed in this by Laurent (op. cit., p. 345, no. 76—'l'amiral Badoli') and Vasmer (op. cit., 89—'Badogi'), has been misled by the form *Badol(i)*. Markwart's analysis of **խազր** *Badoli* as ***Ազդի** *Azdi (i.e. Muḥammad b. Sulaimān al-Azdī al-Samarqandī) with its far-fetched explanation of the initial **խ** B-, is to be rejected. A correct Armenian form of the name would be **Badlsi*; in the form *Badoli u s* has been confused with *n o* and displaced.

² *Patgos* is the title of 'governor', also given below (p. 461, n. 3) to Muḥammad b. Khālīd Buḡhārā Khodhāh (*Bulzar Xoyta Patgos*). Hübschmann (*Armenische Grammatik*, Leipzig, 1895, 223, s. *patgosapan*) considers the form *patgos-k'* in T'ovma Areruni, *Patmut' iwn tann Arcruneg*, ed. St. Petersburg, 1887, 286, hardly correct. Its occurrence (in the singular) here and below, however, confirms this usage.

³ cf. Ya'qūbī, II.587; Ghazarian, op. cit., p. 42, no. 64, and p. 50; Vasmer, op. cit., 89; Laurent, op. cit., p. 345, nos. 78, 79, 81; Markwart, op. cit., 408, 410–11, 461. Step'annos Tarōneçi (Asolik), *Patmut' iwn tiezerakan*, II.2, tr. Dulaaurier, Paris, 1883, pp. 134–5, gives the date of his march on Tiflis as 290 A (30 April 841–29 April 842 A.D.) and says that he died (not specifically that he was killed) in the village of Xosapir in Ĵavaxk'. Ibn Khallikān (tr. Slane, IV.230–1) says that he became ill on his way to Tiflis and died at Dwin in A.H. 230 (A.D. 844–5), while the Georgian Chronicle supports Movsēs' statement that Khālīd was killed: 'Xalil [i.e. Xalid] returned a third time and was killed in Ĵawaxet' (S. Qauxč'išvili (ed.), *K'art'lis c'xovreba*, Tiflis, 1955, I, 255; Brosset (tr.), *Histoire de la Géorgie*, 265).

that Markwart ought to have calculated the eight years from the last date implied by Movsēs, i.e. A.D. 834/5, whereby he would have arrived at A.D. 842/3, it is now evident that no amendment is necessary, for between the account of the martyrdom of Yovhan in A.D. 834/5 and the death of 'Xazr Patgos', we must restore a passage which finally implies for the death of Khālid a date of 291 A (30 April 842–29 April 843).¹ The complete passage, as contained in British Museum MS Or. 5621, is as follows ²:

TEXT

British Museum MS Or. 5621 fol. 242r–243v

Fol. 242r
line 10

Իսկ ի միևսում ամին զառուրս . իս . եղելոյ սաստիկ անձրեաց,
լցաւ ծայրալիր հոսմամբ գետն իրար մինչև . թե . հրասախ
արտաքս ծովանալ ընդ եդեալն³ իւր սահման: Եւ ան-
դուստ յաշխարհական ծովէն Կասբից⁴ ելանէ վիշապաձուկն
մի անարի նման լերին . և զորսորդաց ձկունս յորովայն իւր
ամայէր . և սնավաստակ մնալ որսորդացն լինէր: Աստ իմն
հնարեալ նաւորդացն, գումարեալք ի մի վայր, յօշեն զնա ի
տոնոյն կողմանէ սրով, մինչև սատակիլ նմա . և իրաւ տանել
զնա ուստի եկն: Եւ ապա դիւրաւ // լինէր որսորդացն գիւտ
ձկանցն, զի իբրև ի կապարանէ արձակեալ գային:

Fol. 242v

Ի նոյն ամի տէր Գաւիթ Հայոց կաթուղիկոս վաղձանեցաւ,
և անէծ զյափշտակողսն ի սրբոյն⁵ Գրիգորի հողոյն, որք էին
այսոքիկ: Աբղմեւք Ջահաբայ⁶ որդի⁷ որով⁸ սատակիւր: Եւ
Աբղասուր հարձոյ⁹ որդի, և Աբուջափր¹⁰ Արաճացի, աճան ի
Պարտաւ և կենգանոյն տիկ հանին զերկոսեանն:

Եւ գիտութիւն իմն զայս ուսաք զամիր մոմ'նոյ
զարապասին¹¹. Թէ յաջակողմ դրանն նստի շուրտայաց աւագն¹²,

¹ See below, p. 461, n. 7.

² The text reproduced here follows the original manuscript exactly, except that it has been divided into paragraphs and that proper names are printed with capital initials, the original being inconsistent in this respect.

³ P220 ետեալ.

⁴ P220 Կասպից.

⁵ P220 զս<ը>րոյն.

⁶ P220 ճահաբայ. ⁷ P220. Q. E2561; E1725 որ նորին; V1, V2 om. ⁸ P220; V1, V2 սրով.

⁹ P220 Աբղայ Սուրհարձոյ; E2561, Q... Սուրհարձոյ; V1, V2... Սուրհալայ;
E1725... Սուրհարայ.

¹⁰ E2561, E1725, Q; P220 Ապուճափր; V1, V2 Աբուջափր.

¹¹ P220 տարաբասին.

¹² P220 շուրտահաց աւագն.

որ մեծ է քան յայլնն դաճապետաց աւագ: Եւ ձախոյ
կողմանն, դատաւորն, և դանձու ամիրայն. որք առնէին
իրաւունս, և զտիեղերաց հարկաց վճարմունս: եւ յինն ժամ
աւուրն մտանն առաջի. և զվաղորդայն աւուրն հրաման
առնուն. և զմարտկան մատակարարեն զօգտակարսն:

Իսկ յերկու. Ճ. ձգ. Թուոյն Հայոց. Բ. Ժ. ան. Ը.¹ հեծելոց
յանկարճահաս եղեալ ի Բախտատայ,² արշաւեն երկիրս Աղուանից:

Fol. 243r

Անդ//աին ի վ<ե>ր³ հարեալ Սահլի Սմբատեան⁴, որ
յարքայից զառմիրհական տոհմէն էր, գործակից իւր կալեալ
զմեծ նահատակն Գէորգիոս⁵, դիմէ ի վ<ե>ր<այ> ո<ր>պ<ե>
արծուի խոյացեալ ի տկար Թռչունս. այսր անդր ցրուեալ տապաս
դաշտացն արկեալ վանէր: Եւ ի նոյն ամին, նոյն տէրն
Սահլի Սմբատեան ձերբակալ արարեալ զապստամբն Բաբան,
զմարդախողխող, աշխարհաւեր, արիւնարբու գազանն. և ետ ի
ձեռս ամիր մոմնոյ: Եւ ընդ վաստակոցն առնու յարքունեացն
վարձս բարիս: Օգի առնու իշխանութի<ւն> ի վ<ե>ր<այ>
Հայոց, Վրաց, և Աղուանից. տիրել իշխանութե<ամ>բ
ամենեցուն արքայաբար:

Այլ յ. ԲՃ. ձէ. Թուականին Հայոց Աբրահամ ամիր մոմնի
գնա զօրու մեծաւ յաշխարհն Հռոմոց, էառ զմեծ քաղաքն
զԼմովրիայ⁶, սրով և գերութե<ամ>բ: Եւ անտի դարձաւ ի
բնակութի<ւն> իւր: Սա է Ապու Սահակն:

Fol. 243v

Ի նոյն ամի տերանց տէրն Հովանէս, որ Հայոց, Վրաց և
Աղուանից եղև տէր, խնդրեաց յարքունեացն կրկին անգամ,
վճով//խար, Խոտա, Փատգոս⁷, երեցս այսոցիկ աշխարհաց:

Եւ այնմ ամի ել մարախ ի Խաղրաց կուսէ, զարմանալի,
մեծ քան զճնճղուկ և եկեր զմասն ինչ Աղուանից աշխարհիս:
Եւ յետ երկուց ամաց դժընդակ եղեալ կարի ձմեռն կեղեալ
հասոյց մահ անասնոց և հովուաց բազմաց:

Եւ ընդ աւուրս ընդ այնոսիկ եկին հասին Վաղաքականացիքն⁸

¹ P220 երկուտասան հազար.

² P220, E2561, Q; E1725 Բաղդադայ; V1, V2 Բաղտատայ.

³ P220 ի վերայ. ⁴ P220, Սմբատեան. ⁵ E2561, Q; P220, E1725 Գէորգիոս.

⁶ P220, V1, V2, Q; E2561, E1725 զԼմովրիայ.

⁷ E2561, E1725, Q; P220 Բուլխար Խոյտա Փատգոս; V1, V2 Բուլխարխոյ

Տափատգոս.

⁸ P220, E2561, Q; E1725, V1, V2 Վաղականացիքն.

և արարին վնաս Սիսան Չորոյ¹ և Ամարաս² դաւառաց :
 և ել Եսայի, անուանեալն Ապու Մուտ³ ի վ<ե>ր<այ>
 ն<ո>ց<ա>, և կոտորեաց զն<ո>ս<ա> :

TRANSLATION

And the next year³ there were heavy rains for 40 days and the River Kur filled to overflowing and flooded the land for 15 parasangs beyond its established limits. There emerged from the Caspian Sea a dragon-fish as large as a mountain, and it swallowed the fishermen's fish into its belly, and the fishermen laboured in vain. Then the sailors devised a plan, assembled in one place and cut the fish with a sword in the region of its tail until it died. The Kur bore it away whence it came. Thereafter it was easy for the fishermen to catch the fish, for they came as though released from prison.

In the same year Lord Dawit', Catholicos of Armenia, died,⁴ and he cursed those who stole the land of St. Gregory, who were these : Abdlmelk' [son of]⁵ Ĵahab, whereby⁶ he was killed ; Abdla son of Surharč⁷ and Abuĵap'r⁸ Aracaçi were taken to Partaw and both flayed alive.

And we learned this information about the court of the Amir Momnin⁹ : to the right of the court sits the chief of the *šurta*¹⁰ who is greater than the chief of the executioners, and on the left the judge and the amir of the Treasury who render justice and (receive) the payment of taxes of the universe. One appears before them at the ninth hour and receives the command on the following day. They also administer the public services.

In the year 286 of the Armenian era¹¹ 20,000 horsemen suddenly emerged from Baghdad and ravaged the land of Albania. Hereupon Sahl i Smbatean, who was of the Zairmirhakan family of kings,¹² having as his ally the great martyr George,¹³ lifted up his eyes and met them like an eagle swooping down upon helpless birds. And he smote them and scattered them over the plains and put them to flight. In the same year the same Lord Sahl i Smbatean captured the rebel Baban, the murderous, world-ravaging, bloodthirsty beast, and delivered him into the hands of the Amir Momnin. And for his efforts he received a goodly reward from the court, for he received sovereignty over Armenia, Georgia, and Albania, to rule authoritatively and regally over all.

¹ Q; P220 Սիսան Չորոյ; E2561 Սիսանճորոյ; E1725 Սիսան որոյ; V1, V2 Սանարոյ.

² P220, Q, E2561, E1725; V1, V2 Ամարաս.

³ i.e. A.D. 835/6, one year after al-Badghisi's arrival in 834/5; see p. 457, n. 1.

⁴ Dawit' of Mazaz (cf. Asolik, II.2, tr. Dulaaurier, p. 134).

⁵ V1, V2, om.; E1725 'who of the same' (?).

⁶ Or 'by whom'; V1, V2 'by the sword'.

⁷ V1, V2 'of Surhal'; E1725 'of Surhar'; BM might be read 'of Sur the concubine (*harč*)'.

⁸ P220, Apuĵap'r; V1, V2, Abuĵafr.

⁹ i.e. the 'Amīr al-Mu'minīn, the caliph.

¹⁰ i.e. the *ṣāhib al-šurta*.

¹¹ i.e. 286 A (1 May 837–30 April 838).

¹² See Commentary, section A, below.

¹³ The identity of this martyr George is not clear.

In the year 287 of the Armenian era Abraham Amir Momnin went with a large army to the kingdom of the Romans and took the great town of Emovria (Amorium) by sword and enslavement. And thence he returned to his abode ; he is Apu Sahak.¹

In the same year the Lord of Lords Yovhannēs,² who became lord of Armenia, Georgia, and Albania, supplicated the court a second time for these three lands through Bulxar Xoyta Patgos.³

And in this year a locust came from the direction of the Khazars, an extraordinary thing larger than a sparrow, and it ate up part of the land of Albania.

After two years⁴ the winter was most severe and afflicted and brought death upon many beasts and herdsmen. And in these days the K'alak'akanāçik'⁵ came and wrought havoc on the cantons of Sisan Jor and Amaras.⁶ And Esay, called Abu Musē, rose against them and routed them.⁷

¹ 287 A (1 May 838–30 April 839 A.D.) is the correct date for the capture of Amorium by Abu Ishāq Muhammad al-Mu'tašim ; the town fell in 838 according to Theophanes Cont., III.31 (ed. Bonn, p. 127), more precisely on 23 September 838 according to Arab historians (cf. Weil, *Geschichte der Chalifen*, Mannheim, 1846–62, II, 315 ; Daghaschean, op. cit., 10). According to Byzantine sources, the caliph was aided in his campaign by the Armenian army (cf. refs. in Laurent, op. cit., p. 212, n. 6 ; R. Grousset, *Histoire de l'Arménie*, Paris, 1947, 354).

² This Lord of Lords Yovhannēs who supplicates the caliph through Bulxar Xoyta Patgos (i.e. Muhammad b. Khālid Bukhārā Khodhāh, governor of Armenia under al-Mu'tašim ; cf. Markwart, op. cit., 410, 461 ; Ghazarian, op. cit., p. 42, no. 62 ; Laurent, op. cit., p. 345, no. 77 ; Vasmer, op. cit., 84, 87, 88, 89, 103) in A.D. 838/9 is Yovhannēs of Ova, Catholicos of Armenia A.D. 833–55. He was for a time deposed by Bagarat of Tarōn, and it was the pro-Arab Smbat Ablabas who summoned the synod which restored him to the catholicosate (cf. T'ovma Arcruni, II.6, pp. 114–15 ; Vardan, *Hawak'umn patmut'ean*, XLIII, ed. Venice, 1862, 80 ; John Catholicos, XIII, tr. St. Martin, 103–4 ; Step'annos Ōrbēlean, I.37, tr. Brosset, p. 102 ; R. Grousset, op. cit., 350–1). The present passage indicates that a direct appeal was made to the caliph to settle this ecclesiastical dispute, just as in 704 an appeal was made to the caliph by the patriarch Elia to intervene in the Nersēs Bakur affair (see Movsēs Kalankatuāçi, III.5). We now have a date for Yovhannēs' restoration, elsewhere assumed to have taken place *circa* A.D. 841 (e.g. R. Grousset, op. cit., 350). Movsēs' dating affects also Bukhārā Khodhāh. Vasmer (op. cit., 89) gives the date of his appointment as 'beginning of 225' (inc. 12 November 839 A.D.), whereas the present passage implies that he was governor already in 287 A (1 May 838–30 April 839 A.D.), which falls in A.H. 224 (23 November 838–11 November 839 A.D.). As Vasmer suggests (loc. cit., n. 11), Laurent's date (op. cit., p. 345, no. 77) for the beginning of Bukhārā Khodhāh's governorship (A.D. 840/1) is too late.

³ BM, Q, E1725, E2561 have an erroneous punctuation (*Bulxar, Xoyta, Patgos*) which I have corrected above ; P220 has (correctly) *Bulxar Xoyta P'atkos* ; V1, V2 (incorrectly) *Bulxarxoy Tap'atgos* (!).

⁴ i.e. 289 A (30 April 840–29 April 841).

⁵ E1725, V1, V2, *Balakanaçik'*.

⁶ Amaras is normally referred to not as a canton (*gawař*) but as a village in the canton of Miws Haband in the province of Arçax ; see İnçičean, *Storagrut'iwñ hin Hayastaneayc*, Venice, 1822, 306 ; Hübschmann, 'Ortsnamen', 350. In two other instances it is called a canton in Movsēs (below, p. 464). Sisan Jor (Sisan Valley) seems to be otherwise unknown, unless it is to be connected with the canton of Sisakan i kotak in the province of Arçax (Hübschmann, loc. cit., pp. 349–50, no. 130 ; *Sis* + suffix *-ān* ?, cf. *Sisakan* apud Hübschmann, loc. cit., 467).

The reading *K'alak'akanāçik'* seems to point to *k'alak'akan* 'pertaining to the town, urban' and *k'alak'açik'* 'townsmen', but is as it stands an unlikely formation. It has been left in the above translation because this follows BM, but *Balakanaçik'* seems to me the better reading ; see below, p. 463.

⁷ At this point the other manuscripts and editions take up the story : 'When another two

COMMENTARY

A. *The antecedents of Sahl i Smbatean*

In this passage, Sahl i Smbatean, who is called *Ēranšahik* at III, 19,¹ is said to be of 'the Zairmirhakan family of kings'. This indicates that Sahl was the descendant of the Zairmirh *Ēranšahik* who was the sole survivor of the *Ēranšahik* family when they were treacherously exterminated by Vardan K'aj of the Mihrakan dynasty and was spared only because he was the husband of one of the daughters of Vardan's family.² *Ēranšahik* is not to be taken as the title of ایرانشاه, as Markwart already half guessed.³ Suggestions that Sahl was a Bagratid⁴ or that his family came originally from Tarōn⁵ are to be discarded, or at least revised, in the light of the present passage, which is the only explicit statement on Sahl's origin, hitherto a mystery, found in Armenian sources. One cannot exclude the possibility, however, of this eminently respectable Albanian genealogy having been falsely assumed by Sahl or invented by the historian or his source in an attempt to legitimize Sahl's claim to the throne of Albania.

According to the Arab historians Sahl, although he had been an ally of Babek (Baban), was prevailed upon by Afshin to deliver up the fleeing rebel who had taken refuge with him.⁶ For this service Sahl received, according to Mas'ūdi,⁷ a royal robe, a crown, and a horse, and was exempted from tribute, all of which amounts to an official investiture as ruler of Albania.⁸ The exemption from tribute must have been no more than official acceptance of the *status*

years had passed after this [i.e. 287 A + 2 + 2 = 291 A (A.D. 842/3)], Xazr Patgos, a furious and merciless man, came and was killed in the same year; his son [Muḥammad] came, however, and took our land by the sword and enslaved us and burned down many churches and then went to Baghdad. Returning thence at the king's command and expense, he built the city of Ganjak in the canton of Aršakašēn [BM *add.* in the year 295 (A.D. 846/7)]. After this he raided the land of Siwnik and enslaved the territory of Balk' [St. Orb., I. xxxiii *Balasakan* (!)] and descended into a village called Ark'unaget and straightway ordered the church dedicated to St. Gregory to be burned down . . .

¹ Ed. S, II, p. 54, ed. E, 263, tr. Patk., 266.

² Mos. Kal., II.17, ed. S, I, p. 288, ed. E, 136 (*zArmīrhn Ēranšahik*), tr. Patk., 136.

³ Streifz., p. 457, d: 'If Sahl i Smbatean receives the title of *իրانشاه* (ایران شاه) already in 821/2, this, unless perhaps it denotes his descent from the old princely house of the Aronšahik [*sic*], is incorrect, since Sahl, as we learn from Ya'qūbī, took possession of Arran only under al-Mu'tašim'.

⁴ Daghasbaschean, op. cit., 6, takes Sahl to be the son of the contemporary generalissimo of Armenia, Smbat Bagratuni; this is completely without foundation and his surprise that Sahl 'is nowhere called the son of Smbat the Generalissimo but merely the son of Smbat' is wholly unjustified. Smbat is hardly an uncommon name in Armenian history.

⁵ V. Minorsky, 'Caucasica IV', *BSOAS*, xv, 3, 1953, 506-8; C. Toumanoff, 'The early Bagratids', *Le Muséon*, LXII, 1949, 54.

⁶ Laurent, 113; V. Minorsky, op. cit., 510.

⁷ VII, p. 126 (Laurent, p. 113, n. 10); Ṭabarī, III.1272, mentions 1,000,000 dirhams for himself, 100,000 for his son Mu'āwiya, a gem-studded belt, the title of *batrīq* with a tiara; cf. V. Minorsky, op. cit., p. 510, n. 2.

⁸ Laurent, 74, 113.

quo, for already in 835, when Muḥammad b. Suleymān al-'Azdi al-Samarqandī arrived to govern Armenia, Sahl had revolted against the Arabs and made himself master of Arran¹; this fact is discreetly ignored by the caliph in 837. The Armenian historian Vardan speaks only of a monetary reward: 'Sahl, son of Smbat, seizes Baban and receives from Ap'shin gifts of a thousand *kšir* of silver and yet another hundred thousand'.² Movsēs' statement that Sahl received sovereignty over Armenia, Georgia, and Albania is, of course, a gross exaggeration. Sahl was not even sole ruler of Albania, and T'ovma Arcruni calls him only 'lord of Šak'ē'.³ Among the prisoners captured by Bogha al-Kabīr in 854 John Catholicos⁴ and T'ovma Arcruni⁵ mention three Albanian princes: Atrnerseh, lord of Xaçēn,⁶ Sahl son of Smbat, lord of Šak'ē, and Esay Abu Musē, lord of K't'iš in Arçax.⁷ After the murder of the Mihrakan prince Varaz Trdat in 821/2,⁸ the last vestige of political unity disappeared from Albania; his murderer Nerseh, son of P'ilippē, although he is said to have stolen all the possessions of Varaz-Trdat, does not appear to have played any subsequent role in the destiny of Albania. The Albanian princes seem to have ruled independently, although Atrnerseh of Xaçēn was probably the most powerful; John Catholicos calls him the 'great prince of Albania', he was allied by marriage to the Mihrakans through Varaz-Trdat's daughter Spram after her father's murder, and his descendants were the chief rulers of Albania.⁹

B. *The Balakanaçik'*

The reading *K'alak'akanacik'* of some MSS, which seems to point, although a doubtful formation, to *k'alak'akan* 'urban' or *k'alak'açik* 'townsmen', has been left in the above translation because this follows BM, but *Balakanaçik'* seems the better reading, the former being possibly a scribe's attempt to explain the latter.

The *Balakanaçik'* already appear in the *History of the Albanians* at III.19.¹⁰ E and S have the form *Balakaçik'*, but this is probably corrupt. Paris (Bibliothèque Nationale) MS no. 219 has *Balakçi-s-n*, but the readings of the other Paris MSS (nos. 217, 218, *Balakaneçi-s-n*; 221, *Balakandeci-s-n*; 220, *Balanikeçi-s*) all point to an original reading practically identical with that of our present text. After the account of the unsuccessful revolt of the canton of Balk' in E. Siwnik' against Babek and the latter's attack on Gełark'uni in

¹ Markwart, *Streifz.*, 461; Laurent, p. 114, note; Ghazarian, op. cit., 50.

² Vardan, XLII, ed. Venice, 1862, p. 79.

³ III.11, ed. St. Petbg., p. 191; V. Minorsky, op. cit., 506.

⁴ XIII, tr. St. Martin, p. 114.

⁵ loc. cit., n. 32.

⁶ Mos. Kal., III.22, ed. S, II, p. 69, ed. E, 273, tr. Patk., 278.

⁷ See below, p. 464.

⁸ Mos. Kal., III.19, ed. S, II, p. 54, ed. E, 263, tr. Patk., 266.

⁹ Mos. Kal., III.22, ed. S, II, p. 69, ed. E, 273, tr. Patk., 278.

¹⁰ ed. S, II, p. 55, ed. E, 264, tr. Patk., 269.

W. Siwnik' the following year in 276A (A.D. 827/8), Movsēs relates ¹ how, some time before A.D. 830/1, the Balakaneçik' attack the canton of Berjor and the villages of Ureac, Kaṛnakaš, Hakari, and Tap'at in the province of Arçax, only to be repulsed by the Albanian Step'annos Ablasad with the aid of Babek. In A.D. 830/1 (276A + 2 + 1 = 279A), Step'annos Ablasad is assassinated by Dawon and Šapuh, and the Balakaneçik' again revolt, fortify themselves in Goroz,² and according to Movsēs, hold for 12 years the following cantons of Albania: Upper Vaykunik', Berjor, Sisakan [i kotak], [Miws] Haband, Amaras, Pazkank', Mxank' (all in Arçax³), and Tri (in Uti).⁴ At this juncture, Movsēs tells us that 'after this, Ablasad's men seized his murderers and tortured them to death [and] Esay, called Abu Musē, a man of peace, the nephew (sister's son) of Ablasad,⁵ took possession of those same cantons and ruled over all. In the same year, Baban crossed the River Araxes and encamped in the canton of Amaras'. It is clear that if the Balakaneçik' hold these cantons for 12 years, it cannot be until about 841/2 that Esay retrieves them, and this passage must therefore be in the nature of a parenthesis anticipating future events. 'After this' must mean 'after these twelve years', while the 'same year' in which Babek marches against them must refer to 830/1. This intervention of Babek was clearly to the advantage of Esay Abu Musē and it is possible that he, like his uncle Ablasad before him, invoked the Persian's aid. The impregnable nature of the fortress of Goroz is illustrated by the fact that Babek is reduced to 'talking words of peace' to persuade the rebels to surrender—a method markedly different from that employed a few years earlier in Balk' and Gelark'uni—and finally returns to Atrpatakan leaving his general Rōstom in charge of the action with strict orders 'not to do battle with the fortress but to bring it to submission by friendliness'. The general, however, ignores the command and attacks, whereupon 'the men of the fortress, trusting in the power of Christ and carrying crosses and relics of the saints before them, inflict a severe defeat upon the Persian army'.

It is clear that the Balakaneçik' who in 840/1 are defeated by Esay Abu Musē

¹ ed. S, II, pp. 53–6, ed. E, 263–4, tr. Patk., 267–9.

² Probably modern Goris (see Gerüsy on map appended to H. F. B. Lynch, *Armenia: travels and studies*, London, 1901, 39° 50' N., 46° 35' E.). T'ovma Arcruni, III.70, mentions it (p. 186) as a 'high place (*barjrawandak teli*)' and says (p. 187) that it lay 'near the mountain of K't'iš', the headquarters of Esay Abu Musē. Professor Minorsky has calculated (op. cit., 513) that K't'iš (and therefore Goroz) lay in the region of Shusha. Uxtanēs Urhayeçi mentions 'the canton of Goroz near the plain of Partaw, called P'aytakaran' (M. Brosset, *Deux historiens arméniens* . . ., St. Petersburg, 1870, 344; Uxtanēs Episkopos, *Patmut'iw n bažanman Vraç i Hayoç*, Ch. 64, Valarsapat, 1871, Pt. 2, p. 121).

³ Hübschmann, 'Ortsnamen', 351–2.

⁴ *ibid.*, 352.

⁵ For the biography of Esay Abu Musē see V. Minorsky, op. cit., 512 ff. Laurent has considerably confused Esay's genealogy. He takes Varaz-Trdat's son Step'annos (actually killed as an infant 'on his mother's breast' in 821; cf. Mos. Kal., III.19, ed. S, II, p. 54) to be Step'annos Ablasad (p. 112), whence it would follow that Esay, correctly called a nephew of Ablasad elsewhere (p. 113, n. 6), would be Varaz-Trdat's grandson, which is absurd. On p. 113 Esay is said to be the son of Atrnerseh son of Sahak of W. Siwnik', whereas Atrnerseh's sons are specifically named (Mos. Kal., III.22, ed. S, II, p. 69, tr. Patk., 278) as Grigor and Apuset'.

are the same people who revolted in 830/1, and the present passage is a confirmation of the (approximate) period of 12 years given in III.19 as the duration of the Goroz rebellion. As to the identity of these Balakanaçik', Professor Minorsky¹ has pointed to Baylaqān, and notwithstanding the unexpected Arabic form of the name of the province the Armenians knew as P'aytakaran, this is historically feasible. The province of P'aytakaran would, like Siwnik', have revolted against Babek who, despite his alliances with local personalities like Step'annos Ablasad and Esay Abu Musē, was unable at this period of his career to control the large territory he sought to wrest from Arab authority.

A further complication in this historico-philological problem is the fact that Step'annos Ōrbēlean, referring to the revolt of (according to Movsēs Kalankatuaci) the canton of Balk' in 826, appears to attribute it not to Balk' but to the people of Balasakan (the plain of Balāsaĵān).² The manuscript in Brosset's possession, however, has the reading *Balakan* (Brosset: *Baghacan*)³ and is clearly to be preferred to *Balasakan*, which is probably due to scribal confusion. Even if the *Balasakan* form here were genuine, however, there would be no compulsion to prefer it to Movsēs'. Much of the subject matter of this particular chapter in Step'annos Ōrbēlean is probably taken from Movsēs and where the former differs he (Step'annos) is not to be preferred. In explaining, for example, how Vasak of Siwnik' called in Babek, he mentions Mruan (Merwān) as coming to Armenia in 176 A/A.D. 737, whereas Movsēs says the invader to be Sewada and the year to be 270 A (A.D. 821/2).⁴ Movsēs' information is clearly compatible with Babek's dates, while Step'annos is a century out.

C. The 'dragon-fish'

The identity of the *վիշապաձուկն* *višapajukn*, literally 'višap-fish' or 'dragon-fish', which entered the flooded Kura in A.D. 835/6 and caused such anxiety to the fishermen before it was finally killed with a sword, is something of a problem. The word is used in the Armenian Bible⁵ and the Armenian Physiologus⁶ for Greek *κῆτος*. Elsewhere in the Bible⁷ *κῆτος* is represented by *կէտ* *kēt*, and in the Physiologus *višapajukn* is used as a gloss on this loanword (i.e. *kētn višapajukn*)⁸ as well as independently.⁹ The Georgian

¹ op. cit., 513.

² St. Orb., xxxiii, ed. Tiflis, pp. 158, 159, tr. Brosset, I, p. 96 (both following Šahnazarean's Paris edition of 1859). There are references to this discrepancy in V. Minorsky, op. cit., 513, and E. Honigmann and A. Maricq, *Recherches sur les Res gestae divi Saporis*, Bruxelles, 1953, p. 88, note.

³ Brosset, I, p. 96, n. 3.

⁴ St. Orb., xxxiii, tr. Brosset, I, p. 95; Mos. Kal., III.19, ed. S, II, p. 54, ed. E, 263, tr. Patk., 266.

⁵ Jonah ii, 11.

⁶ N.Y. Marr, *Fiziolog—Armyano-gruzinskii izvod (Teksty i razyskaniya . . . kniga VI)*, St. Petersburg, 1904, 26, 98.

⁷ e.g. Gen. i, 21; Jonah ii, 1, 2.

⁸ N.Y. Marr, op. cit., 27.

⁹ *ibid.*, 26.

equivalent of *višapajukn* in the Physiologus is ղըՊձ-տըղՆո *vešap'-t'evzi* 'vešap'-fish'¹ while *kētn višapajukn* is represented by ղըՊձ-կՆԹո *vešap'-k'ēl'i* 'vesap'-whale'.² By itself, Arm. *višap* is used extensively in the Bible to translate Greek *δράκων* which itself represents a variety of Hebrew words.³ The use of *vešap'*, a loanword from the Armenian,⁴ is more extensive in the Georgian Bible, for where, e.g. at Jonah ii, 1, the Armenian version has *kēl*, the Georgian has *vešap'i didi* 'large vešap'',⁵ and at Jonah ii, 11, where the Armenian has *višapajukn*, the Georgian has *vešap'i* alone.

In Armenian mythology the *višap* is as indeterminate and polymorphous as dragons and monsters anywhere. Its one indispensable characteristic is enormous size; in the words of Vardan Vardapet, 'there is no such thing as a *k'aġ* or a *višap*; *višap* is only a word, for whatever in the world is of great size is called a *višap*'.⁶ The same writer explains the *višap* of Psalm lxxiii, 14 (A.V. 'Leviathan') as referring to Pharaoh.⁷ The *višap* could be a land or a sea monster, as witness Eznik Kolbaçi: '... They call *višaps* both the enormous land-snakes and the mountain-shaped marine beast, I mean whales (*kēl-k'*) and dolphins (*delp'in-k'*). . . . Do you see that the Scriptures call the great fish born in the sea *višaps*? . . . The *višaps* are nothing but great land-snakes or enormous fish, concerning which latter it is said that they are as tall as mountains and very big, and that the small fishes are their prey and food, just as some very small insects or animals are those of the big snakes'.⁸ The thirteenth-century Gēorg Vardapet tells us that 'the Scriptures call the huge whales (*kēl-k'*) in the unnavigable seas *višaps* on account of their great and monstrous size', and that 'as the whale *višap-fish* (*kētn višapajukn*) dwells in distant and deserted seas, so does Satan dwell in barren souls',⁹ while an Armenian ritual says that 'the hosts of unclean spirits shall be crushed by His power as Dagon the *višapajukn* by the ark of the Lord'.¹⁰

Although, as far as marine life is concerned, Eznik specifies the whale

¹ *ibid.*, 26; cf. the German translation by G. Graf, 'Der georgische Physiologos', *Caucasica*, fasc. 2, 1925, pp. 105-6.

² Marr, *op. cit.*, 27, 57.

³ e.g. Exod. vii, 9, 10. Hebrew *tannîn*, Authorized Version 'serpent'; Job vii, 12, *tannîn* 'whale'; Job xx, 16, *pethen* 'asp'; Amos ix, 3, *naḥāš* 'serpent'.

⁴ T. Kluge, 'Die griechischen, armenischen und persischen Lehnwörter im Georgischen', *WZKM*, xxx, 1917-18, p. 114, nr. 20.

⁵ N. Y. Marr in N. Y. Marr and J. Smirnov, *Les vichaps*, Leningrad, 1931, and *Fiziolog*, 98, concludes that the Armenian Bible first had *višap* in this passage, translated by the Georgians as *vešap'*; then the Armenians revised it on the Greek text to *kēl*, while the Georgians retained the old reading.

⁶ Vardan Vardapet, *Harçmunk' ew patasxanik'* 'Questions and answers', quoted from Etchmiadzin MS no. 453 (A.D. 1628) by N. Y. Marr, 'Iz letnei poezdki v Armeniyu IV', *Zapiski Vostochnogo Otdela Imperatorskogo Russkogo Arkheologicheskogo Obshchestva*, v, 1890, [publ.] 1891, 219-23.

⁷ *ibid.*

⁸ Eznik Kolbaçi, *Elc alandoç* 'Refutation of the Sects', 1.25, ed. Venice, 1926, pp. 114-15.

⁹ Gēorg Vardapet, 'Commentary on Isaiah', quoted by *Nor bargirk' haykazeen lezui*, II, Venice, 1836-7, 823, 824.

¹⁰ *Maštoç*, *ibid.*, 824; cf. 1 Samuel v, 1-4.

and the dolphin as višaps, the monster of 835/6 was neither of these. There are no whales in the Caspian, nor any dolphins,¹ and unless we wish to dismiss the matter as a fisherman's tale, we are forced to look elsewhere for the identification of a marine creature which, though of considerable size, could yet be killed by the sword. The largest fish in the Caspian at the present day are the sturgeon, one variety of which, the *Huso huso*, can attain a length of four metres and a weight of one and a half tons.² In 1827 one of these fish was caught in the Caspian weighing one and a half tons,³ while a specimen approximately twelve feet long has been caught in the mouth of the Kura.⁴ The *Huso huso* has the largest mouth of any member of the Acipenseridae and feeds mainly on roach, herring, and chub. Berg states that it is now caught singly in the Kura and gives statistics for numbers caught in the lower reaches of the Kura.⁵ The 'dragon-fish' of the present passage was probably much further upstream than the lower reaches of the Kura during the flood, and a large sturgeon in unfamiliar waters might well have given rise to the tale reported in Movsēs Kałankatuāci. To suggest this explanation is not to be unaware of being, as a non-ichthyologist, somewhat out of one's depth.

Eznik has told us that the višap could be a land or a sea monster. It could also, apparently, be both, for an interesting account of a potentially amphibious specimen, kindly pointed out to me by Dr. D. M. Lang, is contained in the Georgian Life of St. David of Gareja. 'If the dragon had entered the river waters', the angel of the Lord who has killed the monster tells St. David, 'he would have passed on into the sea. By eating the fish there, he would have grown enormous in size, and have overturned many ships in the ocean and destroyed many living souls in the seas'.⁶ An ability to become airborne is also reported, for Vardan Vardapet discloses that many people claimed to 'have seen višaps rise from the earth to the skies'.⁷ This might refer to the fact that the whirlwind was looked upon as the action of a višap; Movsēs Xorenaçi refers to the 'convulsions of višaps swollen from the blowing of the winds by their gigantic gaping',⁸ while John of P'arisos called Sarkawag Vardapet (twelfth century) feels himself obliged to refute the views of 'ignorant peasants', pointing out that 'the swirl of dust from the ground into the air in a hurricane is not a višap, but a whirlwind'.⁹ Eznik also reveals that it was thought that višaps could assume all manner of shapes (such as those of men,

¹ N. A. Bobrinski, *Opredeľitel' mlekopitayushchikh SSSR*, Moscow, 1944, p. 198: 'they [Delphinidae] do not occur in enclosed basins, in particular the Caspian (*v zamknutykh basseynakh, v chastnosti v Kaspii, otsutstvuyut*)'.

² L. S. Berg, *Ryby presnykh vod SSSR i sopredelnykh stran*, Moscow, 1948, I, 57; *Bolshaya Sovetskaya entsiklopediya*, IV, 1950, 538 (*sub art.* 'Beluga').

³ Berg, *op. cit.*, p. 61, n. 2.

⁴ *Bolsh. Sov. ents.*, XX, 1953, *sub* 'Kaspiiskoe More', plate facing p. 327.

⁵ Berg, *op. cit.*, 61.

⁶ D. M. Lang, *Lives and legends of the Georgian Saints*, London, 1956, 85-6.

⁷ *Harçmunk' ew pataszanik'*, *loc. cit.*

⁸ *Patmut'wn Hayoç*, III.37, ed. Venice, 1881, p. 476.

⁹ Treatise on seismology, quoted by *Nor bargirk'*, II, 824.

snakes, mules, and camels), lived in palaces, kept beasts of burden, hunted like men, and kept kings and heroes (e.g. Artavazd) prisoner, etc.¹ The literature on the višaps is quite extensive,² but this is, I feel, not the place for an excursion into the world of mythology, which will have to await another occasion.

It will be seen that the present passage so accurately covers the events of the missing period of eight years which Markwart was compelled to postulate on the basis of outside evidence that the question of later invention and interpolation into the text of the *History of the Caucasian Albanians* hardly arises, and we must rather assume that in some way it came to be omitted from the manuscripts of Group I. Its comparative importance will also be recognized. Apart from minor details (from the linguistic point of view its support for the form *patgos* is welcome), it implies a reasonable date for the death of Khālīd, gives us a plausible genealogy for the prince Sahl i Smbatean whose origin has hitherto been obscure, corroborates the dates given by Greek and Arab historians for the capture of the Persian rebel Babek and the fall of Amorium, allows us to identify the Arab governor Muḥammad b. Khālīd Bukhārā Khodhāh, and, by its mention of the K'alak'anaçik' or Bałakanaçik', leads us to a re-examination of the revolts and invasions with which the prince Esay Abu Musē had to contend before establishing his authority in his part of Albania.

¹ *Elc alandoç*, I.25, ed. Venice, 1926, pp. 113–15; cf. Movsēs Xorenaçi, I.30, ed. Venice, 1881, p. 125, etc.

² See M. H. Ananikian, in J. Hastings (ed.), *Encyclopedia of religion and ethics*, I, 1908, sub Armenia (Zoroastrian), para. 3, pp. 799–800; Minas Tchéráz, 'Notes sur la mythologie arménienne', *Transactions of the Ninth International Congress of Orientalists*, London 1893, 827–8. On the Iranian origin of the višap, see E. Benveniste, 'L'origine du višap arménien', *Revue des Études Arméniennes*, VII, 1927, 7–9. On the large stone images of fish found in the Caucasus, see N. Y. Marr and J. Smirnov, *Les vichaps*, Leningrad, 1931, and refs. in O. G. von Wesendonk, 'Über georgisches Heidentum', *Caucasica*, fasc. 1, 1924, p. 37, n. 2.